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connection special adaptation to divers habitats brings about great differences in plants, and we find those of high altitudes and dry sunny locations differing widely from those of moist low places. Many of the problems of distribution and of special floras are touched upon in this connection. The special functions of the green leaves in the formation of organic food from the absorbed inorganic food; the transport of substances in living plants and the propelling forces in the conversion and distribution of materials constitute an interesting but a much more technical group of facts, leading naturally to the treatment of growth and ultimate structure of plants, till we reach the completed structures, passing by progressive stages in complexity from unicellular organisms to plant bodies and the forms of their roots, stems and leaves.

The remainder of the work is promised soon and will be looked for with much interest. The translators deserve a great deal of credit for the clearness of the style, the beauty of the text and the fine character of the illustrations, which are taken from the original plates, by permission of the author.

*A traverse le Caucase.* ÉMILE LEVIER. Neuchâtel, Attinger Frères. 1894.

As the rest of the title indicates, these are the notes and impressions of a botanist, illustrated by numerous photographs taken by one of the party, Mr. Stephen Sommier, supplemented by others from the collection of Vittorio Sella, whose Alpine and Caucasian views are famous. The illustrations add great interest to the work, giving, as they do, views of the people, their towns and buildings, and the wild, picturesque country in which they live. The journal also is full of word pictures, and recounts in a lively and interesting manner the experiences of the party, the details of their journey as well as their adventures in the wild gorges among the snow-clad mountains which they traversed. Their experiences with the natives, the numerous courtesies and hospitalities received from the Russian officials, their adventures in search of plants and game, their photographic trials and anthropological researches, fill a large and handsome volume of 335 pages and hold the interest of the reader from beginning to end. A

map completes the list of illustrations, one of which is a picture of the Botanic Garden at Tiflis. A list of new species detected is appended.

ELIZABETH G. BRITTON.

#### SOCIETIES AND ACADEMIES.

BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON, 247TH MEETING, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19TH.

MR. SYLVESTER D. JUDD read a paper entitled 'The Food of the Catbird, Brown Thrasher and House Wren,' in which he said that these three birds destroy beetles, ants, caterpillars, grasshoppers and many other insects; also, that the wren is exclusively insectivorous, but that the catbird and thrasher subsist largely on wild fruits, occasionally making inroads on cultivated varieties.

Mr. L. O. Howard spoke briefly of a new enemy of the Hellgrammite fly. In August of the present year Mr. R. S. Clifton called his attention to the fact that the egg masses of the Hellgrammite on the shores of the Potomac River were being eaten by some insect. Investigation showed that the egg masses, which had never before been known to be attacked by any insect, were being eaten wholesale by the larvæ of *Anthicus haldemanni*, an extremely rare Anthicid beetle. Of the hundreds of egg masses examined none were unattacked. The beetle gnaws a hole through the cover of the egg mass and lays its eggs within. The larvæ feed upon the Hellgrammite eggs until full grown, then crawl away to a crack in the rocks and transform to pupæ.

The speaker claimed especial interest for the observation from three facts: (1). The egg masses of the Hellgrammite were previously supposed so be uninfested by any insect enemy. (2.) *Anthicus haldemanni* is a very rare beetle, which has never before been taken in the District of Columbia. It occurred in hundreds this season at the point where the observations were made. (3.) Almost no observations are upon record regarding the early stages of the family Anthicidæ. Of the 130 odd North American species the larvæ of none have heretofore been observed.

Mr. Dall showed some fat still containing a